CDC
BEGINNINGS

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) was established as the Office of Malaria Control in War Areas (MCWA) by the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) during World War II, to reduce malaria around American military installations. Atlanta was selected as the MCWA headquarters because of its central location in the southern U.S. where malaria was then common.

At the end of World War II, the federal government provided resources to fight contagious (or communicable) diseases throughout the U.S. On July 1, 1946, MCWA was renamed the Communicable Disease Center (CDC) with offices located in Georgia (Atlanta, Chamblee, Savannah) and Alabama (Montgomery).

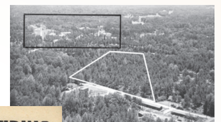
Encouraged by Robert W. Woodruff, the philanthropist and chairman of The Coca-Cola Company and Emory University board member, Emory transferred 15 acres of land in 1947 to the USPHS for just $10 to use for the construction of a central CDC campus. Even in the era of the 5¢ Coke, this was an extraordinary value.

This is the property provided to CDC for its original campus—Michael Street on your left marks the dividing line between CDC and Emory. Construction began in 1955 after Congress provided $12 million for the project. The new campus included six buildings designed by Atlanta architectural firm Robert and Company, and was dedicated on September 8, 1960. By the time of its dedication, expansion plans were already underway for the campus. Between 1961 and 1964, six major additions were made to the original buildings and two new buildings were constructed, including a laboratory, mechanical shop, and warehouse.

Headquarters buildings under construction, 1959

1940s

A 1945 Malaria Control in War Areas (MCWA) publication produced by the United States Public Health Service (USPHS).


Emory University (outlined in black) transferred 15 acres of land (outlined in white) along Clifton Road in 1947 to the USPHS for CDC's first headquarters.

A 1946 Communicable Disease Center (later called CDC) mosquito-control publication that built upon the work of its predecessor—MCWA.

1950s


In 1957, the USPHS transferred its Venereal Disease (VD) unit to CDC, which began activities including providing state-of-the-art lab training, helping to build capacity among state laboratory technicians in particular. CDC continues to work to prevent sexually transmitted diseases.

The Epidemiologic Intelligence Service (EIS) was established in 1951 to train disease detectives. The worn-out shoe leather logo became the EIS symbol because EIS officers do field work investigating disease outbreaks around the world.


An Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) officer takes a throat specimen used in the diagnosis of polio (myelitis). EIS continues to support vaccination campaigns and monitoring activities.

In the 1950s, VD posters, such as this one, were used to raise awareness about the risks for sexually transmitted diseases.

1960s

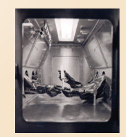
In 1961, CDC began to publish the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR). The crown jewel of CDC science communications and published every Thursday since then, MMWR often publishes new science within hours or days of new discoveries.


Vaccination campaigns, led by CDC and funded through the 1961 Vaccine Assistance Act, contributed to a dramatic decrease in cases of childhood diseases such as measles. By the end of the decade, cases of measles had been reduced more than 93 percent, from 503,000 in 1962 to under 26,000 in 1969.


This 1966 aerial photo shows CDC's completed headquarters buildings along Clifton Road. Emory's campus is visible in the upper left.


In 1967, CDC took over quarantine activities within the U.S. and at U.S. borders. This USPHS cutter ship transported quarantine inspectors who boarded and cleared ships to dock at U.S. ports.

A 1963 poster featuring "Wellbee," CDC's national symbol of public health that helped promote the polio vaccine.


Following the 1960s outbreaks of Lassa fever and Marburg fever (highly deadly diseases), CDC built new maximum containment laboratories. Here, CDC microbiologists investigate Marburg fever in what was then a state-of-the-art "hot lab."

To learn more about CDC's rich history, visit the David J. Sencer CDC Museum.
www.cdc.gov\museum

CDC
HEADQUARTERS

To the front is the site of Building 1, which was CDC's headquarters from 1960 to 1990. A granite marker pinpoints the original site of the former CDC director's office. During this time, CDC became a national and international leader in protecting the public's health. CDC served as a key player in the global eradication of smallpox and worked to identify and research new infectious diseases, including Legionnaires' disease and HIV/AIDS.

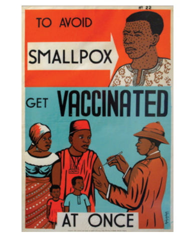
During the 1970s and 1980s, the agency expanded to apply epidemiology to domestic challenges such as air pollution, birth defects, lead poisoning, contaminated drinking water, violence, and foodborne outbreaks. In 1978, CDC completed construction of a new "hot lab" facility to provide a safe work environment for scientists handling dangerous infectious viruses, such as Ebola and Marburg.

CDC teams help respond to natural and man-made disasters around the globe. The agency's focus also includes health education, nutrition, injuries, the effects of smoking, environmental health, and occupational safety and health.

Reflecting this broadening mission, CDC's name was modified over the years. From the National Communicable Disease Center, Center for Disease Control, Centers for Disease Control, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Throughout, he initials CDC have remained the same.

Laboratory Building, 1988

1970s



In the late 1960s, CDC played a vital role in the global effort to eradicate smallpox, using vaccination campaigns, prevention measures, and disease surveillance. Smallpox was officially eradicated around the world in 1980.


Photo credit: Earl Dotter
A Pennsylvania coal miner sets a roof expansion bolt in 1976. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), part of CDC since 1973, conducts research leading to recommendations for preventing work-related injury and illness.

In 1976, the USPHS transferred work from what became the Office on Smoking and Health to CDC. Since then not only has CDC tracked smoking in the U.S., it has also conducted many campaigns that support the scientific information on the dangers of tobacco and to get people to quit.

In January, 1977 CDC scientists isolated the bacterial agent that became known as "legionella", named after a 1976 outbreak. CDC had been asked to investigate cases of illness and death among attendees who went to a convention of the American Legion in Philadelphia, PA. The disease was identified by CDC as a new type of pneumonia (lung infection) that became known as Legionnaires' disease.

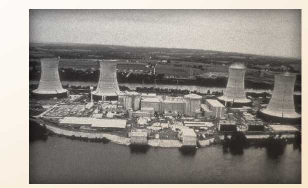
CDC's scientists and disease detectives are routinely called on worldwide to stop or prevent outbreaks such as this.


Since 1971, CDC scientists have traveled across the country every year in specially-designed and equipped mobile centers, to conduct the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES). Among its uses, NHANES findings are the basis for national standards for such measurements as height, weight, and blood pressure and help to better study, understand and improve the health of Americans.

1980s

The Lead Contamination Control Act of 1988 authorized CDC to initiate the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program. Among its goals and accomplishments has been the development of programs, policies and tools to prevent childhood lead poisoning and to educate the public and health care providers about the issue and how to identify and prevent it.

Since reports of the first cases of AIDS were published in the U.S. in 1981 in CDC's MMWR, CDC has been a national leader in controlling and preventing the spread of HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. In 1987, CDC launched the first AIDS education campaign, "America Responds to AIDS" and continues to conduct campaigns today.


The 1980 Three Mile Island nuclear accident led to the creation of the National Center for Environmental Health at CDC. It works to prevent premature death, illness, and disabilities caused by toxic substances in the environment.


In 1986, CDC established the Division of Injury Epidemiology and Control to investigate injuries that are leading causes of death. This was later renamed the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, which helps to protect Americans from injuries and violence.

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SAVING LIVES,
PROTECTING PEOPLE

From this angle, the original and expanded areas of the CDC campus can be seen. The original six buildings that housed offices, laboratories, an audiovisual department, a small auditorium, and cafeteria are no longer standing. The last of these was demolished in 2011.

CDC marked its 50th anniversary in 1996 with offices in Hyattsville, MD, Research Triangle Park, NC, Cincinnati, OH, Morgantown , WV, Spokane, WA, Pittsburgh, PA, San Juan, Puerto, Rico and Fort Collins, CO as well as quarantine offices throughout the country.

By the late 1990s, Congress approved a plan to construct world-class facilities for cutting-edge science research and approved the purchase of additional land along Clifton Road to the west. This acquisition increased the size of the Atlanta campus to about 47 acres. The campus also acquired a new name: the Edward R. Roybal campus, in honor of the California congressman who was one of CDC's most influential supporters. All of the original campus buildings were located between Houston Mill Road and Clifton Way, which is to the right. After the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the U.S. and the anthrax attacks that followed, CDC modified its construction plans to strengthen security measures addressing bio-terrorism threats.

The expanded Roybal campus opened in 2005 with the completion of a new headquarters building, new laboratories, and the Global Communications Center. The newer facilities reflect the needs of a highly technical and scientific agency tasked with tackling health security challenges of today and tomorrow.

Laboratory Building, 2001

1990s


In 1993, CDC identified a mysterious illness in the southwestern U.S. as hantavirus transmitted by infected rodents through urine, droppings, and saliva.

In 1991, CDC released research recommending that women add extra folic acid to their diets before and during pregnancy to help prevent major birth defects of the baby's brain and spine.

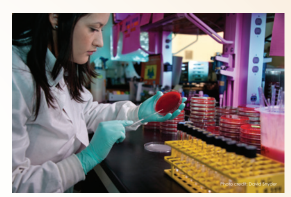
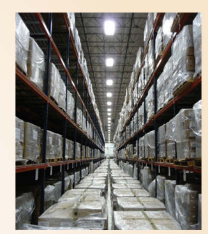


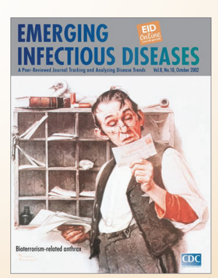
Photo credit: David Snyder
Since 1996, CDC PulseNet has tracked foodborne sickness and used DNA "fingerprinting" of the germs in foods making people sick to better control and protect against foodborne outbreaks, one of the most common forms of infectious disease.


To be more prepared to respond to emergencies, in 1999 CDC launched the National Pharmaceutical Stockpile, now known as the Strategic National Stockpile. These boxes and pallets contain drugs, vaccines, and other medical products that in an emergency can be sent across the U.S. within hours.

2000s

CDC is a key agency in implementing the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) that began in 2003, with a goal of creating an AIDS-free generation. This 2007 poster celebrates global connections in the fight against HIV/AIDS.


Photo credit: FEMA
CDC was at Ground Zero within hours of the World Trade Center (WTC) attacks in New York on September 11, 2001, providing safety and health assistance to responders throughout the rescue and recovery periods.



In October 2001, CDC investigated the deliberate anthrax attacks in the U.S. in which deadly Anthrax spores were sent in letters through the U.S. Postal Service. CDC was at the forefront of the nation's response, working around the clock with state and local health officials to determine the source of the attacks, control the damage, and minimize the risk of exposure to the general public. A special issue of Emerging Infectious Diseases© devoted to bioterrorism-related anthrax was published in 2002, in which investigators related their experiences and lessons learned.

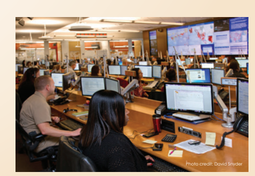


Photo credit: David Snyder
CDC established its state-of-the-art Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in 2003. The EOC serves as a command center for coordinating CDC's emergency response activities to health threats in the U.S. and abroad. CDC's EOC has been activated for hurricanes, terrorism attacks, influenza outbreaks, new virus threats, and other contagious diseases.

In 2002, as part of an overall effort to respond to the growing problem of childhood obesity, CDC launched a national, multicultural, social marketing campaign. The campaign, VERB™ It's what you do, encouraged tweens, ages 9–13, to be more physically active.

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GLOBAL HEALTH
SECURITY

The newest section of CDC's campus, which includes CDC's Emergency Operations Center (EOC), is visible from this viewpoint. The EOC coordinates responses to health crises such as the 2010 Haiti earthquake, the 2014 Ebola outbreak and the 2015-2016 Flint, MI, lead contaminated water concern. To the far right is CDC Parkway, leading to CDC's public entrance and the David J. Sencer CDC Museum, where you can learn about the history of CDC and view exhibitions about public health issues.

CDC works 24/7 to save lives and protect America from health and safety threats, whether these occur here in the U.S. or stopping them around the world. CDC increases the health security of our nation by putting science and advanced technology into action to prevent and reduce disease. Whether diseases start at home or abroad, are chronic or acute, curable or preventable, human error or deliberate attack, CDC fights disease and supports communities, and those who live in them, to do the same.

Looking forward, CDC will continue to build new facilities to accommodate the growing demands from diseases that threaten Americans' health and to continue its role as the world's leading health protection agency.

Visitors Center Building, 2005

2010s

CDC 24/7 Saving Lives. Protecting People. Saving Money through Prevention.™

CDC has significantly advanced since it was created in 1946 as a wartime agency devoted to malaria control.

Today, it is the nation's health security agency. We work 24/7, saving lives and protecting people from diseases, injuries, and disabilities as well as other health threats including natural disasters and bioterrorism attacks.


CDC helps protect the nation from bacterial and viral diseases transmitted by mosquitoes, ticks, and fleas. Two species of mosquito, such as the one here, are responsible for spreading such diseases as dengue fever, chikungunya virus, and the Zika virus.

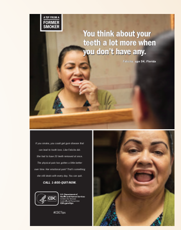

CDC responded to the Ebola epidemic, in 2014–2016, in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea, the largest Ebola outbreak in history. CDC helped to find and trace the people who came into contact with Ebola, confirmed cases of Ebola through laboratory testing, and helped establish infection control procedures and social mobilization campaigns.

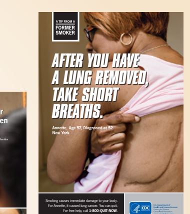

Computer technology advancements are transforming how quickly and accurately a disease can be identified. A CDC computer technology specialist holds a gene sequencing computer chip designed to quickly identify viral DNA in a gene. Called advanced molecular detection (AMD), this 21st-century technology is assisting with genetic decoding of germs and other bacteria, allowing CDC experts to go from a probability to certainty of type of disease in record time to save lives.


Our world is increasingly interconnected, and new diseases are emerging at a record rate, often with the ability to quickly cross borders and spread. The most effective and least expensive way to protect Americans from diseases and other health threats that begin overseas is to stop them before they spread to the U.S.


A CDC scientist works with avian influenza virus. Lab samples are grown to share with partner laboratories to develop vaccines as part of preparing for an influenza that could spread around the world.


CDC staff work with dangerous viruses and bacteria every day. These CDC workers handle dangerous agents in a Biosafety Level 4 laboratory, the highest biosafety level of laboratory at CDC. They wear air-tight, self-contained, positive-pressure suits to keep them safe from contamination by the life-threatening viruses they work with.





CDC launched the "Tips from Former Smokers," in 2012, a national campaign to increase awareness about the human suffering caused by smoking, and to encourage smokers to quit.

CDC works to bring increased attention to stop major and often preventable threats to patient safety when receiving medical care. This culture plate shows the growth of methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) bacteria, an infection patients can get while receiving medical treatment in a healthcare facility such as a hospital.

Million Hearts Begins with You

Million Hearts® is a national initiative to help prevent 1 million heart attacks and strokes by 2017. Led by CDC and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Million Hearts® brings together communities, health systems, nonprofit organizations, federal agencies, and private-sector partners from across the country to fight heart disease and stroke.

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